WHEREAS, in the State of Wisconsin, the price of attending
a University of Wisconsin System institution has increased
sharply, particularly within the last ten years; and
WHEREAS, in the same ten year period, the University of
Wisconsin System has seen a drastic decline in state support;
and
WHEREAS, the sharp decline in state support has put a
significant percentage of the formerly state supported budget on
the responsibility of the students and private donors; and
WHEREAS, in the last ten years, other funds, such as
grants, endowments, and private donations has risen nearly
exponentially in funding the University of Wisconsin System; and
WHEREAS, since the birth of the current University of
Wisconsin System for the 1972-1973 academic year, once adjusted
for inflation, tuition and fees combined have risen over 173%;
and
WHEREAS, since the birth of the current University of
Wisconsin System for the 1972-1973 academic year, once adjusted
for inflation, general purpose revenue (state support) has decreased nearly 20%; and

WHEREAS, since 1978-1979, state support has declined from 45.8% of the total University of Wisconsin System budget to 24.2% in 2006-2007; and

WHEREAS, since the inception of the University of Wisconsin System, tuition increases are directly related to the declining state support of it; and

WHEREAS, on January 11, 2008, the President’s Advisory Group on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy released a draft report on alternative tuition and financial aid policies for the Board of Regents and Administration to consider; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations and alternative discussion points were based on many principles, including the assumed reality that this trend of declining state support will continue; and

WHEREAS, this assumption illustrates the lack of commitment on the part of the state to support public higher education; and

WHEREAS, this assumption also illustrates the lack of commitment on the part of the University of Wisconsin System Administration and Board of Regents to restoring the funds taken from the University of Wisconsin System budget throughout its history; and
WHEREAS, if this trend of defunding of the University of Wisconsin System continues, tuition will continue to rise at unprecedented rates, leading to the inevitable privatization of public higher education in the State of Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, unaffordable tuition should never hinder a citizen from receiving public education; and

WHEREAS, education is a right; and

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin will only stand to gain from providing affordable education; and

WHEREAS, the average student that graduates with debt graduates with over $21,000.00 worth of student loans; and

WHEREAS, significant debt should never be a method of subsidizing education; and

WHEREAS, despite the University of Wisconsin’s lower tuition compared to its peer institutions, it is unacceptable when a student is required to take out a significant amount of loans to finance his or her education; and

WHEREAS, this attitude will help save the University of Wisconsin System from its eventual privatization; and

WHEREAS, tuition increases should be directly related to increases in the quality of our education and not the continued decline of state support; and

WHEREAS, responsible tuition practices are the only way to ensure accessibility for all;
BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate supports responsible tuition practices that take into account the quality of education provided, lasting state support, and continued financial strain placed on students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate recognizes the hard work and commitment of the President’s Advisory Group on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate does not endorse further tuition stratification among the four-year comprehensives because differences in tuition among them should reflect the priorities determined by shared governance through fees and not the perceived value of the varying program strengths at each institution over others; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate does not support increasing tuition to match the peer median because the State of Wisconsin should continue to be an example of best practices in higher education and not try to rationalize the increased reliance on student debt to fund higher education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate generally supports Differential Tuition,
as revealed in its votes to create the first system of
Differential Tuition in the country during the 1990s; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate agrees with the Workgroup Report that
Differential Tuition should be a supplement to our education and
not a replacement of state support; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate does not support tuition-funded financial aid in any form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate supports programs designed to increase the affordability of a college education, especially for lower-income families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate supports greater statutory authority of the Board of Regents to set its expenditures and use tuition and other revenue in effective ways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate endorses financial aid policy principles that resolves to keep student debt minimal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Student Senate endorses tuition policy principles that prioritize affordability above getting the most out of students; and
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that upon passage President Raymond French transmit copies of this resolution to Dr. Brian Levin-Stankevich, Chancellor; Dr. Steven Tallant, Provost/Vice Chancellor; Andrew Soll, Vice Chancellor, Business & Student Services; Representative Jeff Smith; Representative Terry Moulton; Senator Kathleen Vinehout; Senator Pat Kreitlow; Dr. Kevin Reilly, President, UW System; UW System Board of Regents; the Spectator; the Leader-Telegram; Dr. Marty Wood, Chair, University Senate; Ann Lapp, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Development & Diversity; and Jodi Thesing-Ritter, Associate Dean of Student Development, Student Development & Diversity.

Submitted by:
Raymond French, Student Body President
Meghan Charlier, Student Body Vice President
March 3, 2008